From:	Widener, Kelly
Sent:	Tuesday, October 04, 2016 2:57 PM
To:	Radzikowski, Mary Ellen
Cc:	Gentry, James
Subject:	National Priorities Language

Mary Ellen,
Here is an updated summary incorporating your other questions.
Thanks,
Kelly

National Priorities grants/funding are congressionally mandated and not funded through EPA's Science to Achieve Results (STAR) program. This mandated research funding is directed through language in the conference report (the Joint Senate and House budget report), which specifically directs EPA to fund an area or type of research. The National Priorities RFAs are developed in collaboration with EPA experts in the research topic field and contributes/aligns with EPA's broader efforts in the areas. The proposed research of these RFAs fill identified gaps of research knowledge in the environmental and health impact areas related to the congressionally mandated research topics.

For National Priorities funding, there are specific constraints and guidance provided in the appropriations language. These include:

- Funding is used independent of the STAR program.
- Research by not-for-profits organizations who often partner with the Agency.
- Funds awarded competitively with priority given to those projects with a national scope and provide a 25% match.
- Funds are to be allocated to grantees within 180 days of the enactment of the Act.

There are three upcoming grant actions that fall under congressional directive:

Request for Applications (RFAs)
1. Oil and Gas Developments in Appalachian Basin
This RFA is currently open.
*Note: While this grant is funded through the National Priorities (not through the STAR program) congressional mandate, the language used to reference this funding did not require it to adhere to the above National Priorities constraints and guidance.
Estimated Number of Awards: Approx. 1 award
Anticipated Funding Amount: Approx. $2 million total in federal funds for award, including direct and indirect costs, with a maximum duration of 3 years.
Background: There have been rapid increases in oil and gas developments (OGD) in the U.S. during the past decades. The Marcellus Shale and Utica Shale in the Appalachian Basin are two of the largest major reserves for oil and gas and the region has become a major center of "shale gas boom" with thousands of unconventional wells spread throughout the region. The wells and related infrastructures are being located close to population centers, some within a mile or two. There have been steadily increasing public concerns, mainly about potential risks to public health from chemical stressors associated with OGD as well as potential impacts to surrounding environments. For communities near OGD and production sites, the major stressors are air pollutants and ground and surface water contamination. The goal is to understand comprehensive environmental and public health impacts of the chemical stressors. The objective and comprehensive research addressing the multidisciplinary areas of interests pertaining to the topic of OGD include:

  • Water quality, water pollutants, and maintaining sustainable water resources; and

  • Sustainable and Healthy Communities: investigate total environmental impacts from air and water pollutants.

2. FY17 National Priorities: Detecting and Controlling Lead in Drinking Water
This RFA is anticipated to open by the end of the year.
*Note: The final appropriations language for this funding has not yet been released however, it is anticipated that the National Priorities constraints and guidance listed above will apply.
Estimated Number of Awards: Approx. 2 awards
Anticipated Funding Amount: Approx. $4.84 million total in federal funds for all awards; up to a total of $2.42 million per award, including direct and indirect costs, with a maximum duration of 3 years.
Background: The events leading to elevated blood lead levels (BLL) among children in Flint, Michigan are well established. In 2014, the city government sought to cut costs by switching from Detroit's water source to the Flint River. The switch required adding disinfectants to the treatment system, which led to corrosion within the many lead pipes in the city's distribution system, triggering increases in water lead levels (WLL). To address these problems, EPA is issuing this Request for Applications (RFA) to spur innovative research into detecting and controlling lead (Pb) in drinking water. This RFA calls for interdisciplinary, systems-oriented research across an entire continuum: from Pb's occurrence in a community's water supply, treatment and distribution through Pb's effects on public health.

Awards:
1. National Priorities: Impacts of Water Conservation on Water Quality in Premise Plumbing and Water Distribution Systems
These awards are anticipated to be completed and announced in November 2016.
*Note: The National Priorities constraints and guidance listed above applied to this funding.
Estimated Number of Awards: Approx. 2 awards
Anticipated Funding Amount: Approx. $3,978,000 total in federal funds for all awards; up to approx. $1,989,000 per award, including direct and indirect costs, with a maximum duration of three years.
Background: EPA is issuing this Request for Applications (RFA) to fund research into issues of water quality and availability related to distribution systems and premise plumbing systems under lower-flow conditions. The National Research Council (NRC) defines "premise plumbing" as that portion of the distribution system from the main water ferrule or water meter to the consumer's tap in homes, schools, and other buildings. The national scope and high priority of these issues of water quality and availability related to premise plumbing and water distribution systems is evidenced by this NRC report, which attests that a substantial proportion of the nation's waterborne disease outbreaks is attributable to issues within these systems. Increasing potential incidences of disinfection residual loss due to the high water age will only exacerbate this situation (NRC, 2005). (Kick-off Meeting will be in RTP)